

מצוות צריכות כוונה

חג השבועות

The (סימן) paskens שולחן ערוך (ס, סי' ד) that one is obligated to have Kavanah before doing a מצוה. Furthermore, having the kavanah: 'כאשר ציוה ה' can turn a routine action into a full-fledged מצוה!

It is preferable to speak out the words of Kavanah, as the CHovos Halevavos writes:

'המחשבה נמשכת אחר הדיבור'

מצות תלמוד תורה

It is a מצוה דאורייתא to learn Torah at any time as the pasuk says:

'ושננתם לבניך' (דברים ו, ז)

It is brought down in the sefer שימושה של תורה (pg. עד) that Shavuos is the Rosh Hashana of Torah. On Shavuos, Hashem judges and decides every person's share in Torah for the coming year!

For this reason, Shavuos night, may be the best time to start doing this mitzvah with Kavanah. Before starting to learn, remember to say:

**הריני מכוין לקיים
מצות תלמוד תורה
כאשר צוה השם**

It is well known that the Manchester Rosh Yeshiva, Rav Yehuda Zev Segal זצ"ל, Rav Bentzion Aba Shaul זצ"ל and Rav Zundel Kroizer זצ"ל, all began their learning sederim by speaking out their kavanah to fulfill the mitzvah of תלמוד תורה.

In addition, Hagaon Rav Gamliel Rabinovich shlit"a said that HaGaon Hatzadik R' Zundel Kroizer זצ"ל would constantly encourage avreichim in kollel to think (and say) before seder, "לשם מצות תלמוד תורה ולעשות בזה נחת רוח לבורא יתברך שמו".

Hagaon Rav Gamliel Rabinovich also said that his father, Hagaon R' Levi Rabinovitch זט"ל, would constantly encourage people, especially bar mitzvah boys to be 'לשם מצוה' as is brought in the Mishnah Berurah: כדי שתהא תורתם לשמה.

Reb Dovid Tzimmerman, a close talmid of HaRav HaGaon R' Shach זצ"ל, recalled that one day as R' Shach left his home to go give shiur in Ponevezh Yeshiva, he heard him whisper to himself:

"הנני מוכן ומזומן לקיים מצות
ושננתם לבניך".

If one is learning with his son, he can also have Kavanah to fulfill the mitzvah of ולמדתם אתם את בניכם. (Another good time for this Kavanah is when reviewing their פרשה sheets on שבת.)

Before doing so, remember to say,

**הריני מכוין לקיים מצות
ולמדתם אתם את בניכם
כאשר צוה השם**

Rabeinu Yonah explains how a person can find protection from the aveira of תורה ביטול. He writes,

"יתעסק בצרכי התלמידים והרבנים הלומדים לשם שמים ויעזר בשכירות הרבנים כדי שיעמדו בעירו ויהיו עוסקים בתורה על ידו."
(אגרת התשובה אות ז)

מצות זכירת מעמד

הר סיני

It is a mitzvah d'oraysa to remember הר סיני מעמד. This is one of the זכירות, mitzvos that one can fulfill at any times, (and which many people do after davening shachris). Although this mitzvah can be done at any time, there are certain times that lend themselves to doing them.

The Yalkut Shimoni writes (פ' יתר) that when the Aseres Hadibros are leined on Shavuos, Hashem regards Klal Yisroel as once again being mekabel the Torah at Har Sinai. This is a wonderful opportunity to fulfill the mitzvah m'doraysa of זכירת מעמד הר סיני.

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Therefore, before רביעי at shachris on Shavuos, remember to say:

**הריני מכוין לקיים מצות
זכירת מעמד הר סיני
כאשר צוה השם**

This also applies when saying the zechira after shachris on any day.

The Tur writes (או"ח מז) that one should have kavanah to do this mitzvah when saying 'אשר בחר בנו', the second bracha in Birkas HaTorah. The Magen Avrohom writes that when we say the words 'וקרבתנו מלכנו' in Ahava Rabah, one should have in mind the remembrance of Har Sinai, in fulfillment of this mitzvah.

מצות שביתת יום טוב

It is a mitzvah d'oraysa to rest on Shavuos (the first and last day of Pesach, the first day of Sukkos, Shemini Atzeres, Rosh Hashana and Shavuos each have their own separate mitzvah of שביתה). It is especially important to have kavanah for this mitzvah since this year Erev Shavuos is on Shabbos, and one may forget.

At mariv on Shavuos night (or anytime on Shavuos if you forgot) be sure to say:

**הריני מכוין לקיים
מצות שביתת יום טוב
כאשר צוה השם**

קידוש ליום טוב

This year, when the first night of Shavuos falls out on Motzei Shabbos, one should remember to have kavanah for the mitzvah of kiddush for Yom Tov and the

mitzvah of havdala after Shabbos).

Before making Kiddush, one should think:

**הריני מכוין לקיים מצות
קידוש ליום טוב והבדלה לשבת
כאשר צוה השם**

ברכת שהחינו

At Kiddush on Shavuos night, we make the brachah of שהחינו, thanking Hashem for giving us life and allowing us to merit the experience of another Yom Tov (See Yesod v'Shoresh Ho'avodah, who writes that one should have hoda'a atzuma to hashem when saying this bracha. Sha'ar 9, perek 5)

Thanking Hashem is the mitzvah d'oraysa of Zichron Chasdei Hashem. Therefore, one should remember to have in mind at that time:

**הריני מכוין לקיים מצות
זכרון חסדי השם
כאשר צוה השם**

מנהג מאכלי גבינה

There is an established minhag in Klal Yisrael to eat dairy foods on the first day of Shavuos. (Orach Chaim 494:4) When a person fulfills a minhag, they fulfill the mitzvah midivrei kabbalah of שמע בני מוסר אביך, listen, my son, to your father's discipline (Mishlei 1:8) — the mitzvah of keeping established minhagim. (See Mitzvos HaLevavos (Hil. Kavanas HaMitzvos, §20) by HaGaon Rav Mordechai Lichtstein ztz"l.)

Therefore, before eating dairy foods, one should say or have in mind:

**הריני מכוין לקיים
מצות 'שמע בני מוסר אביך'
כאשר צוה השם**

Two-And-A-Half Million Brachos

In his sefer Tuvcha Yabiu, HaGaon Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein refers to the following insight of HaGaon Rav Bentzion Abba-Shaul, Rosh Yeshiva of Porat Yosef. (Rav Zilberstein adds that if not for the fact that this was said by such a great Gaon as Rav Abba-Shaul, we ourselves would not have dared to say it):

Rav Abba-Shaul calculated that in the seventy years of a lifetime, a person will make approximately two-and-a-half million brachos. But when the person passes away and appears before the Heavenly Beis Din, he will discover that out of that great number, only several hundred are reckoned!

Rav Abba-Shaul lamented how a person will arrive with many large cartons to transport his millions of brachos. But when the brachos are analyzed, he will discover that only a few hundred were said with kavanah, simchah and d'veikus. For such an amount, big cartons are not necessary. A couple of plastic bags would suffice! (Tuvcha Yabiu, Parshas Yisro, p. 270)

Applying the Lesson: A person may think that he is doing countless mitzvos, but when the Day of Judgment arrives, he will realize that only a few of his mitzvos are perfect — the ones that were done with proper kavanah! It is well worth thinking about this while we can still do something about it!

חג כשר ושמח!

